



NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
March 23, 2009

For More Information, Contact:
Loreeta Canton
Stacy Eberl
Office of Public Information
North Dakota Department of Health
Phone: 701.328.2372
E-mail: lcanton@nd.gov
sleberl@nd.gov

State Health Department Provides Update on Flood Response Efforts

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health has taken several steps in response to current and future spring flooding across the state, according to Loreeta Canton and Stacy Eberl, public information officers for the Department of Health.

Because of the large amount of snowfall this winter, the Department of Health has been preparing for flood response for weeks. The department's efforts include:

- Department of Health personnel hosted a teleconference with health and medical partners from North Dakota, Minnesota and South Dakota to alert agencies to potential evacuations and review evacuation plans.
- The Department of Health is identifying ambulances in North Dakota, Minnesota and South Dakota willing to assist with health facility evacuations in flooded areas. Currently, 63 ambulances have indicated they are available to assist if needed.
- The Department of Health is collecting bed census information from hospitals, nursing homes and group homes in the three states, including the number of available beds that can be used in the case of patient evacuations. Hospitals will be updating this information daily. The department will use the information to help organize patient transfers, if needed.
- The Department of Health is identifying the number of nursing home residents in affected areas who would need to be transported by ambulance in the event of health facility evacuations.
- The Department of Health sent its mobile communications trailer, including 18 portable handheld radios, to Fargo for use if needed.

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600 E. Boulevard Ave. Dept. 301, Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0200
Phone: 701.328.2372 Fax: 701.328.4727 E-mail: health@nd.gov

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- Medical equipment and supplies from the department's state medical cache were sent to Fargo Cass Public Health. The resources will support two 150-bed medical assistance facilities for non-acute patients awaiting evacuation to a medical facility.
- Emergency medical services supplies from the state medical cache also have been sent to Fargo Cass Public Health.
- The Department of Health sent a Health Alert message to professional medical staff throughout North Dakota to identify physicians, nurses and other medical personnel willing to assist with health and medical missions in flood-impacted areas, if needed. More than 70 medical personnel have volunteered to date.
- The Department of Health has posted fact sheets with flood response information for the public on its website at www.ndhealth.gov/flood. Available fact sheets include information about safe drinking water, tetanus vaccinations and avoiding carbon monoxide poisoning. The website will be updated as more information becomes available.

For more information about the Department of Health's efforts, please contact Loreeta Canton or Stacy Eberl at 701.328.2372.

-- 30 --

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